GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:193
ANSWERED ON:29.07.2016
FM Services
Meinya Dr. Thokchom;Sanjar Shri Alok

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether a number of district headquarters/small towns/villages are yet to be covered under FM radio service across the country and if so, the details thereof, State/UT-wise along with the time by which these areas are likely to be covered under these services;

(b) the criteria laid down for selection of cities for grant of FM radio licence;

(c) whether the Government is considering to give licence to set up more private FM radio stations in the country and if so, the details thereof, State/UT-wise;

(d) whether any State has been left out in the proposal for setting up private FM radio stations and if so, the reasons therefor; and

(e) whether the Government has proposed any key changes in the existing 'FM Licencing & Transmission Policy' and if so, the details thereof along with impact of the said changes in development of FM sector in the country.?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING
[SHRI M.VENKAIAH NAIDU]

(a) to (e) : A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (e) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO.193 FOR ANSWER ON 29.07.2016.

The present Policy on expansion of FM Radio Broadcasting services through Private Agencies (Phase-III) approved by Union Cabinet on 07.07.2011 seeks to extend FM radio services to 227 new and uncovered cities, in addition to the present 67 cities, with a total of 839 new FM radio channels in 294 cities. The details of these 227 new cities are at Annexure-I. Under Phase-III Policy, new FM channels are to be awarded through an auction process.

The Policy envisages setting up of Private FM radio channels in all cities/towns having population above one lakh (based on 2001 census). As an exception to this stipulation, 11 towns in Jammu & Kashmir, North East & Island Territories (having population less than one lakh) have also been proposed for setting up FM radio channels.

Out of 227 new cities identified for introduction of Private FM Radio, applications have already been invited for awarding licence through e-auction in 69 cities under batch-II of FM Phase-III. The details of these 69 cities are at Annexure-II.

No State has been left out in the proposal for introduction of Private FM Radio in these 227 new cities.

Two key changes have been made in the existing FM Phase-III Policy. Existing permission holders have been allowed to migrate their Phase-II licenses to Phase-III on payment of migration fee. Besides, the FDI/FII limit under FM Phase-III has been enhanced to 49% from the earlier 26%. With migration the existing channels will continue uninterrupted and their employees will be able to retain their employment. The increase in FDI is expected to provide the companies with additional capital in setting up of FM radio channels in uncovered cities.

As far as All India Radio is concerned, setting up of FM transmitters at new locations is being taken up in phased manner depending on availability of resources.

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